THE CLARION.

THE "BANG" QUESTION, ETC.

Another Letter from Dr. Smythe.

EDITORS CLARION: Little did I suppose, when I volunteered to shed some light upon the history of the so-called "Bangs," that I was likely to call down such a shower of bangs of a different kind, from any of your fair readers, as your Terry correspondent has deemed it a duty to inflict. Nor did I in my extreme ignorance, suppose that all the poisons and malaria in the South could have brought down such a shower of blows.

Now my dear madams, go easy; I am not one of the men who have any charge against Adam or Eve. I have founded my morals, upon the principles taught in the 18th chapter of the prophet Ezekiel; and do not know anything about the doctrine of original sin: And at no time in my life have I indulged the habit of casting "slurs" on woman. No gentleman would be guilty of such an ungrateful act; such a breach of good breeding or common sense; and the sweetest punishment which could be inflicted would be to treat the perpetrator with silent contempt.

My innocent intention was to furnish a fragment of history which I happened to possess. There being but few survivors of the period or custom referred to, and still fewer who noticed or recollect it.

In my *own* defence permit me to say, in no idle or boasting way, that in my sphere in life, my vocation has brought me into intimate and confidential intercourse with woman, in most of the relations of life, and my first involuntary act was to form a close attachment to one, which continued to the end of her life, and whose memory I cherish as sacredly as I do the memory of my departed sister, daughters and partners. And to her, and to the principles of honor, honesty, truth and virtue, which she taught and instilled into my mind, and its influence upon my action through a long life, am I now indebted for all the character (if any) which I possess. I began life loving woman. The more I know of the good, the more I esteem the sex, and contemplate closing life in the same way.

With regard to the "woman question," I am not in the crusade, but would suggest that in the evolution and progress of human events and human affairs, there will be a survival of the fittest. In short that woman will arrive at her true level. That she has been a slave, from and through all pre-historic ages, to the shame and disgrace of all races and religions to the present day. But the cause is not likely to be advanced by the intemperate zeal of a certain class of reformers of both sexes. There are grave doubts as to whether our present civilization is such as to guarantee the propriety of many changes which are advocated by advanced reformers, persons ahead of the age.

In brief, I would suggest that there be more effort to educate our youth of both sexes, in a more substantial and practical way. Less of the College and University, and more of the good common schools. An education adapted to the every duties and labors of life. Too many of the youth of both sexes educated in College and University, would overthrow the present productions of the country. A substantial and practical education is what the sturdy yeomany, and interests of all classes needs.

A. G. SMYTHE.

New York Railroad Supervision.

Buffalo Express.]

Under the act of 1882, creating a Board of Railroad Commissioners, the reports of the railroads in the State annually to the State Engineer and Surveyor, will hereafter be made to the board. The present report therefore is the last, under the existing order of things, that the engineer will make to the Legislature. It is a coincidence that State Engineer Silas Seymour, submitted to the Legislature the first annual report on the railways of the State, after the repeal of the act of 1855 which had established the first Board of Railroad Commissioners. Now, after an interval of twenty-five years, he submits the last report from his department. Mr. Seymour notes this coincidence, but does not venture into any discussion of the newly constituted commission. The former commission was short-lived. It was created in 1855, and dissolved in 1857. That board consisted of three persons: The State Engineer and Surveyor, one person who was selected on behalf of the stockholders of all railroad corporations of the State, and a third member appointed by the Governor. The present board, it may be unnecessary to state, is composed of two elective members of different politics, and a third to be selected upon the recommendation of the New York Chamber of Commerce and other organizations.

Three Rules for Speakers.

The first, in the words of Horace: "Dicendi recteprincipium est saperes, et fons;" that is, "Know exactly what you are going to say." The second, "Endeavor to forget yourself." This frame of mind has been formulated by old elocutionists as "Have a contempt for your audience." He preferred to state it in a less obnoxious way, as: "Consider yourself one of your audience." The third, "Be natural and unaffected."

By bearing in mind these simple injunctions any man free of congenital or acquired defects, though he might not be a brilliant, could hardly fail in being an agreeable and sympathetic speaker.—London Nature.

THE HOME OF JEFFERSON DAVIS.

M. Quad's Social Chat with the Ex-President of the Confederacy.

It is a drive of five miles over a sandy road and through the oaks and pines and palmettoes from Mississippi City to Beauvoir, the home of Jefferson Davis, and as I passed over the road the other April day, frightening an alligator here, skirting an orange grove there, and all of a sudden breaking out of the forest upon the sandy shores washed by the waves of the gulf, I felt that he had well chosen the home of his old age. His had been a life of turmoil, even before civil war was whispered. He had been a giant in politics, a warrior in Mexico, a diplomat and an antagonist in all the main issues of the day and the problems of civil government. Few lives have been so eventful.

I asked the Justice of the Peace who drove me down in his springless wagon drawn by a span of too-fat horses, if he knew Jefferson Davis, and he answered:

"Why, of course—known him for thirty years."

"And how do the people in the neighborhood feel towards him?"

"Everybody likes him. He is a good neighbor, a just-minded citizen, and has the respect and good will of every man, woman and child."

"Are any of his former slaves in this neighborhood?"

"Plenty of them, and what's more a number of them are now in his employ. He was kind to his people, and when the war closed, and he finally came here to settle down, dozens of his old slaves were ready to hire to him at any price. Of those in his employ, there isn't money enough in the State of Mississippi to hire them to leave him. He has two large cotton plantations, outside of the Beauvoir property, thus directly and indirectly employing hundreds of colored people, and you can't find one who hasn't a good word for him. No siree, mister, there isn't a man in this part of the country better thought of as a neighbor, a citizen and a man than Jefferson Davis."

The house is what we in the North would call a story and a half cottage in height, and it faces the gulf. Around it is a famous grove of oaks and other woods, and from here and there a tree, the long gray moss hangs down and swings in the breeze in its weird and dreamy way. Nature has done much to beautify the grounds, and they are kept in a neat and tidy condition.

The house is roomy, finely furnished and, while there is no ostentatious display, there is a homelike atmosphere and a look of cosy comfort. One can see refinement and taste everywhere, and none of the home comforts are sacrificed. From the veranda one can look out upon the tireless white-caps rolling in upon the sandy beach, and the neighbors are all that the word implies.

I had only a moment to wait before the ex-President came in and gave me a hearty grasp of the hand and words of welcome. Tall, almost snow-white hair and whiskers, blue eyes, face wrinkling with age, voice as soft and kind as a mother's—such was the picture of the man who for four years held the destinies of a continent in his iron grip. In the zenith of his power he may have appeared haughty and imperious to some, but not the generality. A kinder face I have never met, and though there is something in the voice to warn one that its owner has held place and power, one is soon charmed with its kindness and touch of pathos.

Mr. Davis is 73 years of age and his health is not of the best. It is evident that his life of vicissitude is drawing to a close, and as one realizes it he cannot but admire the physical and mental machinery which has stood the strain of so much labor. Many a man of equal age had laid down his burdens of public life when Mr. Davis assumed his greatest. He has been a man without rest until within the past few years. His literary work, entered upon long before his sixtieth birthday, was a task which would have discouraged many an author of twenty years younger, yet he made no pause until the last chapter was in the publisher's hands.

He asked me about my Southern trip—where I had been, whom I had met, and what opinion I had formed of the sentiment of the masses; and when I answered that the North and South seemed more closely united to-day than at any period in our history, he expressed deep gratification. "It is a grand and progressive country," he said, "and the better the people understand each other the better for our future as a country."

He asked me regarding the sentiment of the North, and I believe I answered truly when I told him that rancor and bitterness had died out of the hearts of all but demagogues and malevolent politicians.

"That is right," he replied, "and I trust that no untoward event will sever the growing cordial relations."

By and by we drifted into the subject of war. It was Mr. Davis who gave Gen. McClellan his first upward steps, and it was Mr. Davis who appointed Gen. Meade to the Lake Survey, and was sharply criticised for his selection. He believed that McClellan's campaign against Richmond, had he been permitted to carry it out as planned and received the hearty support of the War Department, must have resulted disastrously to the Confederates.

"I knew McClellan, Meade, Humphrey and nearly all the Federal Generals," said Mr. Davis, "and many of them were my proteges. Although they were fighting my armies I could not resist a feeling of pride in seeing so many of the young men I had helped advance, winning fame and proving all that had been predicted."

I asked him to name the best Federal General, and he replied:

"There were two—McClellan and Meade. McClellan was a grand engineer and a great General; Meade was a steady fighter, and his movements were more of an enigma to Lee than those of any Federal General."

As we talked of this and that, the names of generals, statesmen, governors and government officials came up, and many of them proved to be old acquaintances of Mr. Davis. In years agone he and Ben Butler were on the best social terms, and it was the same with several other present Governors of Northern States, and with various generals who won their laurels in war. The ex-President had a kind word and a good wish for each and every one, and he seemed to believe that those who had made their mark were entirely deserving of their success.

In the State Library at Jackson, Miss., is a crayon portait of Mr. Davis as he appeared when captured. I asked him if it was correct, and he replied:

"I will tell you exactly how it occurred. I had lain down without removing a garment. I had high cavalry boots, pantaloons tucked into the tops, a gray blouse and a soft hat. Upon the alarm being given I stepped out of the tent and saw a Federal cavalryman thirty or forty feet away. He ordered me to halt. At the same moment Mrs. Davis threw over my shoulders a folded shawl. I saw that my only chance of escape was to secure the horse of the Federal. I advanced straight upon him, feeling that he would fire upon me but believing he would miss the target. Had this occurred there would have been a struggle for the possession of the horse. As I approached the soldier he lowered his carbine as if to shoot, and at that moment Mrs. Davis rushed up and threw her arms around me. The soldier hesitated a moment, turned his weapon aside, and I walked back to the fire and stood there until made a prisoner."

Two hours passed swiftly by as we talked, but before permitting me to depart Mr. Davis ordered a lunch and was again the host instead of the historian. One who takes him by the hand and looks into his kind face must respect him. One who sees his white hairs and notes the evidences of old age must feel glad that his few last years are to be full of peace and quietness.—M. Quad in Detroit Free Press, May 5.

Fashion in Writing.

To introduce a note with "compliments" is to be avoided. A cramped style, and a small Italian handwriting, are no longer in vogue. The prevailing style of writing is bold and free; the characters very upright, and the tail toppling "l's" and long-tailed "g's" have quite disappeared from letters in general; a free use of capitals is also indulged in, which gives a dash of originality and spirit to a letter when not overdone. Many gentlemen and a few ladies affect a literary style of letter-writing—that is to say, a margin is left from three-quarters to an inch on the near side of the sheet of paper, which gives rather an imposing look to it; but this is only done when the letter is almost a note in the matter of length. A strictly business habit, adopted for the convenience of being copied by letter-press, by no means a fashionable one, is to write on the first and third pages of a sheet of note paper, leaving the second and fourth pages blank, or to write on the first and fourth pages, leaving the other two unwritten upon. It used to be an idea that to underline words in a letter was "missish" in the extreme, and rather bad style than not; but now if a writer wishes to be emphatic, or to call particular attention to any remark, an stroke of the pen is not objected to, but it is a liberty not to be taken when writing to those with whom one is on ceremony. Another practice of the past, which is now happily discarded, is that of crossing letters. Many people experience a certain difficulty in the choice of a conventional term with which to conclude a ceremonious letter, and it must be admitted that there is not much variety at command, "yours truly," "yours sincerely," "yours faithfully," with the addition, perhaps, of the verb "very," being the principal formula in use; and it is, on the whole, immaterial whether "truly" or "sincerely" is employed when writing to friends. The affectionate expressions addressed to still dearer friends and relations are beside the question, and yet many devoted husbands make use of the words "yours truly" when writing to their wives in preference to any more affectionate phrase. By way of not concluding a letter too abruptly, some persons contrive, before the words, "yours truly," to add some such phrases as these: "Believe me, dear Mrs. Jones," or "I remain, Mrs. Jones," or "Believe me, dear Mrs. Jones, with kind regards." Revivals of Queen Anne fashions are the order of the day, but we have seen no one accusing himself of writing a stupid letter, a dull letter, or an uninteresting letter, nor laying the blame of bad writing on pens, ink and paper. A postscript was formerly supposed to convey the pith or gist of a lady's letter; it is now considered a vulgarism to put P. S. at the bottom of a letter containing the few last words; if something is remembered when the letter is concluded that should have been said, 'it is added without apology.

Success in Practical Life.

If you speak the right word at the right time; if you are careful to leave people with a good impression; if you you do not tresspass upon the rights of others; if you always think of others as well as yourself; if you do not put yourself unduly forward; if you do not forget the courtesies which belong to your position, you are quite sure to accomplish much in life which others with equal ability fail to do. This is where the race is not to the swift nor the battle to the strong. It is where you make people feel that you are unselfish and honorable, and truthful and sincere. This is what society is looking for in men; and it is astonishing how much men are able to win for self-respect and success and usefulness who possess these qualities of good breeding. It is almost the turning point of success in practical life.—Exchange.

The Power of Corporations.

Port Gibson Reveille.]

There is no country in the world says an exchange, where corporations are so numerous and so diversified as in the United States, and as they have entered as a controlling force in American politics, the people have begun studying their influence on the social condition of the nation, and the methods by which they are shaping all things to suit their own requirements; and this study has been intensified by the discovery that they are immortal. There is absolutely no limit to their existence, and except their political influence be destroyed, and their power to centralize wealth restricted, there is no telling what form our government will assume. They are working radical changes in our political and industrial systems, and in the very thoughts and habits of our people. Their rapid growth, their great wealth, their tremendous power, their unity of action and their success in controlling legislation have alarmed the intelligent, and brought into the field of active politics an antagonistic force which is every day extending its lines, as if preparing for an approaching struggle.

The corporations have arisen to their present condition by an unscrupulous use of their wealth and power. They stand unflinchingly by the party which favors their designs, subscribing liberally to its "corruption fund," and making its candidates their own. Executives and Legislatures are their creatures. Many of our great lawyers are their agents. They "control" newspapers to mold public opinion. They hire agents to corrupt Legislatures. There is to-day scarcely a legislative body in the Union that is not in some degree under their influence, nor a judge whose judgment has not been biased by their attorneys. Even our Congressmen take fees in their service while voting on measures affecting their interests. The nation felt degraded by the discovery of the connection of its law-makers with the "Credit Mobilier," and how humbling to the intelligence to learn that they still maintain a like connection with corporations fully as corrupt and equally exacting. Stockholders in National Banks vote in Congress to increase the value of their stocks—to put up the price of their bonds and increase the purchasing power of their money—and the people approve their action. Railroad stockholders and holders of stock of other corporations cast their votes to increase the value of their property or multiply their privileges. It is no uncommon occurrence to see members of Congress who are partners in manufacturing establishments, arrange tariffs so as to "protect" their own products. In fact the government has been made a means by which the people are taxed for the corporations. It has been made a mere addendum to monopolies.

When the government was organized "the fathers" were sedulous in their endeavors to avoid laws of primogeniture and entail, or other means employed in the old country to hold the property in the hands of a few. They took great care that the property should be divided among the heirs at the death of the owner. But corporations are accomplishing what the "father" sought to avoid. If one who holds stock in the corporation dies, his stock is transferred to somebody else, and the corporation lives on. Corporations never die, and their property is never divided, but continually grows, increasing their power to corrupt and extort. They are piling up the wealth of the country into a few great aggerations much faster than could be done by laws of primogeniture and entail; and it would be better that it were left in the hands of individuals, for they have sympathy and charity; corporations have neither. "They have no bodies to be kicked nor souls to be damned." They are without a single human attribute. They exist but to extort. They are the embodiment of monopoly, above the law which brought them into being, and subordinate only to the will of their beneficiaries. The creations of thought and skill are monopolized by them. Progress is their slave. Invention, that would be blessing to the whole people, monopolized by them, has almost become a curse. How can their curse be broken?

In the matter of Railroad monopolies.

The only fair, just, and equitable way is by the appointment of Railroad Commissions, with properly restricted powers, or carefully and judiciously conferred power, on the basis of protection to the public against unjust discriminations, and exactions, with a just regard for the property rights of the people composing the corporations.

The Voice of the Trimmer.

Boston Post.)

"Don't meddle with the tariff again unless you wish to split the party," says the Democratic trimmer. In reply, we say the tariff issue is the great overshadowing issue before the people, and it is an issue which the Democratic party must meet. The party that dodges it invites defeat and deserves to be split. But how about the Republican party? Is not that party divided upon the tariff question? The New York Times, New York Post, Albany Journal, Chicago Tribune, Buffalo Express, to say nothing of scores of Republican newspapers representing intelligent constituencies in the rural districts of the West, are decidedly opposed to a high tariff system, and as decidedly in favor of a genuine reform and reduction in tariff duties. The fact is, the great mass of the Democratic party and a very respectable following in the Republican party demand this reform. For every man who will fall out of the Democratic ranks when the Democratic party shows a determination to stand by its pledges on the tariff question, ten Republicans will step in. The Democratic party must not attempt to keep time to the old Republican music. The party that wins in 1884 will be the party that vigorously fights against excessive taxation, which is just what comes from this old war tariff.

THE COLORED BROTHER.

Opinions of Ex-Senator Bruce and Richard T. Greener of the Proposed Convention.

Washington Special to Cincinnati Commercial.]

Richard T. Greener, LL. D., the eminent colored orator and scholar, was asked about the proposed convention of colored men called to meet in this city September next.

"I have great doubts if it will be held," said he. "But your name is attached to the call."

"I know it," he replied, "but it is entirely unauthorized. I did not attend the meetings of the committee, because I knew they had no status among the colored people of the country, who are naturally and properly restive under dictation or direction from Washington, especially when the motive is in doubt. Men who have rarely shown interest in our race outside of retaining themselves in office, are not the stuff to make real leaders out of. I am opposed to conventions. They do harm rather than good. In them we gather our most turbulent elements. Washington, too, is the worst place to hold a convention. Why not Richmond or Nashville. We have our rights under the law. We are free; have citizenship; have education or educational advantages, and some degree of civil rights. What more do these men want? More office; office, that is all. Some of these men remind me of the Fenian element among the Irish—men who retard Ireland's progress. They have been dancing about, flourishing shellalahs, so long, that they believe the old method still effective. Some of our men are run mad over the notion that this country is to be run to furnish offices on the race quota, and because we were once wards of the nation, we are to be forever under guardianship. I believe in standing up for my rights when assailed and demanding all that belongs to me as an American citizen, but no more. If the negro could get rid of his black leaders, and his white philanthropists by profession, who follow him from the cradle to the grave, he might in time develop into a useful citizen. His real progress is constantly thwarted by these two adverse factors. "Conventions!" said the professor, indignantly; "there never was one that did not disgrace the race by their wranglings. We need some common sense, not conventions."

EX-SENATOR BRUCE.

Hon. B. K. Bruce, Register of the Treasury, in an interview in regard to the condition of his race, said: "Education is the great need of our race now, and I wish that the powers that be could be brought to realize it as keenly as many of our people do. Do you know that many of the colored people so thoroughly realize the necessity for education that they are willing to deprive themselves of almost anything else that this may be had?"

In the course of conversation Mr. Bruce said, referring to the education of his race in the south: "The national government ought to appropriate a sum of money—say $10,000,000—for school purposes there, making it available in case the states do a certain portion of the work. They plead that they are not able to keep up public schools for the negro, or even, indeed, for the whites, saying that the war impoverished them to such an extent. And that is doubtless true, for they lost greatly in their property in addition to their slaves. But the colored people are good citizens as a rule, orderly and diligent, but many of them are becoming property owners and tax-payers. And it is right that they should have educational advantages. Their position as tax-payers entitles them to it, and the power of the ballot which they hold makes it the duty of the government to itself, as well as to them, to make them intelligent."

"Are the colored people of the south becoming land owners, then?"

"Yes; many of them own their own homes now. The progress in that direction has been slow and painful, but they are upon a firm basis now, and will move forward more rapidly. The report of the controller general of Georgia shows that one acre in 50 of the cultivated lands of that State is owned by colored people, and this, I think, is about a fair average of the situation throughout the south generally."

"The colored people are accumulating considerable wealth, then, are they not?"

"Yes; there are a good many quite wealthy men among the colored population now. I don't know of more than one or two who could be counted millionaires, but there are a good many who run up into the hundreds of thousands, and large numbers who are worth say $25,000. The colored man, as a rule, is great on real estate. Let him get possession of a few feet of ground, a home, and he will never part with it if he can help it. He will almost starve rather than do so; and that is a good spirit I think. Make him a tax-payer and owner of the soil, and you make him a good citizen."

"From the standpoint of morality, do you think there is much to be said?"

"Yes; a good deal. The Methodist and Baptist churches alone have nearly 1,500,000 colored people, and the amount of church property they own is quite wonderful. The percentage of crime among them is not large, and the marital relation to-day is infinitely more sacred among the colored people as a class than it was a few years ago."

New England Baptists propose to establish a Summer watering place at Crescent Beach, on the shore of Long Island, about seven miles west of New London.